304 with reference to the head, a custom which had not been practiced by the Miskito. It is no longer performed by the Sumu during the present day.

621 629 There is no trace of any division in clans or exogamic kinship groups. Before the conquest, the Miskito were not ruled by supreme chiefs, but in time of war the elders would choose some young warrior, noted for prowess, to guide the activities of the group. Generally, though, they were not a warlike people. Hereditary chiefs were introduced by the British and the ruler became despotic in activity. His orders would be carried out by quarter masters *(kuntmas)* or by other members of his staff. Foreign traders extended gifts to the Chief (King) for trading privileges and the Indians rendered assistance and taxes. However, the Indians in the interior paid but little attention to this hierarchy. Today there are village chiefs who guide the civic affairs of the community on what appears to be a democratic basis. Decisions are made as a result of council meetings where considerable discussion may take place.

648 The governments of the two republics, Honduras and Nicaragua, have territorial representatives known as comandantes and these are *Ladinos* (see Appendix B). The comandante may have other *Ladinos* on his staff or as is often the case works in close collaboration with the traders. In the upper Coco River the comandante is stationed at San Carlos. He patrols the area, listens to complaints and his decisions are autocratic. He is in military uniform and his status is one of army discipline. The various companies, i. e., fruit enterprises, rubber development agencies, etc., have many *Ladino* foremen who work in close harmony with the comandante. From the Indian point of view considerable friction exists between himself and the government representative. Since the Indians have no recourse with the Central Government, the jurisdiction of their problems rests with the territorial representative. The Indian complains that there is misappropriation of funds and that traders take endless advantage of them. Regardless of right or wrong, conflict exists and as such it is probably due to the lack of peoples' representation in territorial jurisdiction. Government education is at minimum, the various religious missions have generally performed this service to the better satisfaction of the Indians. The Indians live with great equality, there appears to be no rich or poor among them; they do not strive to accumulate wealth.

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674 626 Within the villages themselves government takes place with the elders guided by a chief. A thief is compelled to restore stolen property and an adulterer pays a fine of a gun or a cow. Stealing is rare, except in the more urban areas and adultery is uncovered usually as a result